

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONROV 02253 251302Z

44

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 L-02

SP-02 EB-07 AID-05 IGA-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 OMB-01 SCA-01 /063 W
----- 043656

P R 251229Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5426

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 2253

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ESTC, EFIN, VS

SUBJECT: GVN AMBASSADOR REQUESTS EMBASSY'S ASSISTANCE IN SAFEGUARDING
OFFICIAL AND PERSONAL ASSETS

REF: STATE 091120

SUMMARY: GVN AMBASSADOR FEARS THAT GOL RECOGNITION OF PRG IS
IMMINENT AND THAT ORDER BLOCKING GVN ASSETS WILL BE ISSUED
SIMULTANEOUSLY. HE HAS ASKED IF THIS EMBASSY CAN PROVIDE SAFE
REPOSITORY FOR HIS EMBASSY'S OFFICIAL FUNDS, HIS PERSONAL CHECK-
ING ACCOUNT FUNDS AND HIS PERSONAL PROPERTY NOW IN A SAFE
DEPOSIT BOX. EMBASSY HAS SO FAR DECLINED BUT REQUESTS DEPART-
MENT'S GUIDANCE ON THESE MATTERS.

1. FONMIN DENNIS HAS TOLD GVN AMBASSADOR TRAN THAT GOL WILL
BE GUIDED BY NONALIGNED GROUP POSITION IN RESPECT TO RECOGNITION
OF PRG AND THAT, SO FAR AS TIMING IS CONCERNED, "LIBERIA WILL
NOT BE THE LAST." IN CONVERSATION WITH TRAN EARLIER THIS WEEK
DENNIS HAD ASKED HIS DEPUTY WHETHER IT WOULD BE FEASIBLE TO
RECOGNIZE BOTH GVN AND PRG AT SAME TIME. WHILE APPARENTLY
DISSUADED FROM SUCH A COURSE BY DEPUTY'S POINTING OUT THAT
SAIGON GOVERNMENT IS STILL IN PLACE, DENNIS GAVE TRAN IMPRESSION
THAT GOL MIGHT ACT AT ANY TIME.

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PAGE 02 MONROV 02253 251302Z

2. WIFE OF AMBASSADOR TRAN IS NOW IN US. SHE HAS REPORTED TO

HIM THAT USG ORDER BLOCKING CAMBODIAN ASSETS (STATE 091120) APPLIES NOT ONLY TO OFFICIAL CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS BUT ALSO TO PRIVATE ACCOUNTS OF CAMBODIAN EMBASSY EMPLOYEES. THIS REPORT HAS INCREASED TRAN'S APPREHENSIONS ABOUT POSSIBLE GOL BLOCKING OF GVN ASSETS IN CONNECTION WITH RECOGNITION OF PRG.

3. TRAN IS TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO ABOUT THREE ASSETS: GVN EMBASSY'S CHECKING ACCOUNT (UPON WHICH ONLY TRAN CAN DRAW BUT WITH COUNTERSIGNATURE OF ONE OF HIS STAFF), TRAN'S PERSONAL JOINT CHECKING ACCOUNT WITH HIS WIFE, AND HIS AFETY DEPOSIT BOX CONTAINING ONLY PERSONAL JEWELRY. ALL ARE AT CHASE MANHATTAN BRANCH HERE. HE ANTICIPATES THAT GOL WILL PROBABLY FOLLOW PROCEDURES ANNOUNCED BY USG IN CAMBODIAN CASE. HE HAS NO SAFE AT HIS OWN CHANCERY OR RESIDENCE THAT IS SECURE, AND NONE THAT CANNOT BE CARRIED OFF BY SEVERAL INTRUDERS. HE FRANKLY WORRIES THAT IF IT BECAME KNOWN THAT A LARGE SUM OF MONEY WERE ON HIS PREMISES SOMEONE WOULD ENTER AND KILL HIM TO GET MONEY. HE DOES NOT TRUST HIS OWN STAFF, WHICH HAS ALREADY CAUCUSED AND ASKED HIM TO DIVDE THE EMBASSY'S OFFICIAL ACCOUNT. TRAN HAS ASKED EMBOFF IT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO STORE ANY OR ALL OF ABOVE ASSETS AT THIS EMBASSY.

4. EMBOFF SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT PERSONALLY ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY OF ABOVEASSETS ON HIS OWN PREMISES AND COULD NOT TAKE THEM INTO HIS POSSESSION IN EMBASSY IN HIS PRIVATE CAPACITY, FOR STORAGE ON EMBASSY PREMISES WOULD BE STORAGE BY EMBASSY. EMBOFF SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE STORAGE BY EMBASSY WOULD BE POSSIBLE, FOR IF GOL FREEZE ORDER APPLIED TO ASSETS EMBASSY HAD TAKEN INTO CUSTODY, EMBASSY WOULD THEN BE IN POSITION OF APPEARING TO HAVE CONSPIRED TO CIRCUMVENT ORDER. MOREOVER, EMBOFF SAID, IF USG SHOULD ORDER VIETNAMESE ASSETS BLOCKED, AS IN CAMBODIAN CASE, EMBASSY, AS USG AGENCY, MIGHT WELL BE BOUND TO TREAT TRAN'S ASSETS AS BLOCKED, DEFEATING TRAN'S VERY PURPOSE IN PUTTING THEM IN EMBASSY'S CUSTODY. IN SUCH A CASE EMBASSY CERTAINLY COULD NOT RELEASE FUNDS WITHOUT SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FROM DEPARTMENT, AND EMBASSY HAS NO WAY OF KNOWING WHAT THOSE INSTRUCTIONS MIGHT BE.

5. REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON THESE QUESTIONS RELATING TO TAKING INTO CUSTODY OFFICIAL ASSETS OF GVN EMBASSY AND PERSONAL ASSETS OF GVN EMBASSY EMPLOYEES. WOULD APPRECIATE
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PAGE 03 MONROV 02253 251302Z

DEPARTMENT'S VIEW ON WHETHER AMBASSADOR'S STATUS DIFFERS IN THIS RESPECT FROM THAT OF OTHER EMBASSY EMPLOYEES.
MANFULL

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